

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 07, 2011

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki  
Secretary  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As we have previously discussed, the egregious violations of medical standards of practice at the Dayton VA Medical Center's Dental Clinic are unacceptable, as is the time it took for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to be informed of the violations and begin to correct them. As the VA and the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs continue to investigate this situation, I call on you to take additional steps in accordance with your authority as Secretary.

We must determine how, for more than 18 years, the VA allowed patient care to erode to the point where hundreds of patients at Dayton had to be tested for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV because they were exposed to blood borne pathogens as a result of their care. Those who enabled this to happen must be held accountable. We must also identify the source of this problem and ensure that a similar working environment has not taken root at any other VA Medical facility. We must do all we can to prevent this situation from ever happening again.

I ask that you create a dedicated task force with appropriate staff and resources to review all of VISN 10's facilities, activities, and services. Doing so will allow VA to identify how lapses in the past allowed this situation to happen, and what measures can be taken to prevent similar lapses in the future. Such a task force should include health care professionals, VA medical professionals and employees, veterans, and leaders in the veteran community. If given the ability to perform a collaborative, tough, and fair look at VISN 10, this task force can provide invaluable insight to the VA and policy makers. The results can then be used to improve VISN 10's services and services at all VA facilities.

Finally, taking this bold step will reassure our veterans that the VA remains dedicated to their care and patient safety. It will also give veterans and those who care for them a seat at the table and the opportunity to participate in the improvement the VA system.

I appreciate your consideration of my request and I thank you for your service to our nation and its veterans. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Michael Turner  
United States Congressman